

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A surgical method, comprising:
2 positioning a fixation member relative to tissue,
3 moving a flexible member coupled to the fixation member relative to the fixation
4 member to bring two tissue surfaces together, and
5 moving a retaining element coupled to the flexible member relative to the fixation
6 member, the retaining element acting to limit loosening of the flexible member relative to the
7 fixation member.
- 1 2. The surgical method of claim 1 wherein the step of moving the flexible member
2 comprises pulling the flexible member.
- 1 3. The surgical method of claim 1 wherein the step of moving the flexible member also
2 accomplishes the step of moving the retaining element.
- 1 4. The surgical method of claim 3 further comprising providing the retaining element in
2 the form of a slip knot.
- 1 5. The surgical method of claim 1 wherein the step of moving the retaining element
2 includes moving the retaining element relative to the flexible element.
- 1 6. The surgical method of claim 5 further comprising providing the retaining element in
2 the form of a friction element which permits sliding of the retaining element relative to the
3 flexible element in only one direction.
- 1 7. The surgical method of claim 1 further comprising providing the retaining element in
2 the form of an overhand knot.
- 1 8. The surgical method of claim 7 further comprising advancing the overhand knot
2 along the flexible element.

1 9. The surgical method of claim 1 further comprising providing the retaining element in
2 the form of a Chinese trap.

1 10. The surgical method of claim 1 wherein the step of moving the flexible member
2 includes pulling on only one end of the flexible member.

1 11. The surgical method of claim 1 further comprising positioning a second fixation
2 member relative to the tissue, the second fixation member being coupled to the flexible
3 member.

1 12. The surgical method of claim 11 wherein the second fixation member is movably
2 coupled to the flexible member, the step of moving the flexible member including pulling on
3 two ends of the flexible member.

1 13. The surgical method of claim 11 wherein the second fixation member is fixedly
2 attached to the flexible member, the step of moving the flexible member including pulling on
3 only one end of the flexible member.

1 14. The surgical method of claim 1 wherein the step of positioning the fixation member
2 includes positioning the fixation member on an outer surface of the tissue.

1 15. The surgical method of claim 14 wherein the two tissue surfaces are both soft tissue.

1 16. The surgical method of claim 1 wherein the step of positioning the fixation member
2 includes positioning the fixation member in a bone hole.

1 17. The surgical method of claim 1 wherein a first of the two tissue surfaces is bone, and
2 a second of the two tissue surfaces is soft tissue.

1 18. The surgical method of claim 1 wherein the step of positioning the fixation member
2 includes passing the fixation member through a loop of the flexible member.

1 19. The surgical method of claim 18 further comprising positioning the loop within a tear
2 in soft tissue.

1 20. A method for repairing a tear in soft tissue, comprising:
2 advancing a fixation member coupled to a flexible member through tissue on either side
3 of the tear and through a loop of the flexible member, and
4 tensioning the flexible member to bring two tissue surfaces on either side of the tear
5 together.

1 21. The method of claim 20 further comprising positioning the loop within the tear.

1 22. The method of claim 20 further comprising pulling an end of the flexible member to
2 bring the two tissue surfaces together.

1 23. The method of claim 20 further comprising providing the fixation member in the
2 form of a barbed member.

1 24. An apparatus for repairing a tear in soft tissue, comprising:
2 at least two fixation members,
3 a flexible member substantially immovably secured to a first of the fixation members and
4 movably coupled to a second of the fixation members, and
5 a retaining element coupled to the flexible member, the retaining element being movable
6 relative to the second fixation member and acting to limit loosening of the flexible member
7 relative to the second fixation member.

1 25. An apparatus for repairing a tear in soft tissue, comprising:
2 at least two fixation members,
3 a flexible member substantially immovably secured to a first of the fixation members and
4 movably coupled to a second of the fixation members, and
5 a retaining element coupled to the flexible member, the retaining element being slidably
6 received by the flexible member and acting to limit loosening of the flexible member relative
7 to the second fixation member.

1 ~~26. An apparatus for repairing a tear in soft tissue, comprising:~~
2 a fixation member, and
3 a flexible member movably coupled to the fixation member, a first end of the flexible
4 member being looped back and secured to the flexible member for form a loop, the loop
5 being remote from the fixation member.

1 ~~27. A flexible member holder, comprising:~~
2 a shaft,
3 a first tine at an end region of the shaft defining a first region for receiving a first portion
4 of a loop of a flexible member, and
5 a second tine at the end region of the shaft defining a second region for receiving a
6 second portion of the loop of the flexible member.

1 28. The holder of claim 27 wherein the shaft comprises a tube.

1 29. The holder of claim 27 wherein each of the first and second regions comprises a
2 groove.

1 ~~30. A device for repairing a tear in a tissue, comprising:~~
2 a needle having a distal region and a proximal region, the distal region being defined
3 between two holding elements,
4 a first fixation member positioned within the distal region and a second fixation member
5 positioned within the proximal region, and
6 a flexible member coupled to the first and second fixation members.

1 31. The device of claim 30 wherein one of the holding elements comprises a crimp in the
2 needle in the distal region.

1 32. The device of claim 30 wherein one of the holding elements comprises a dimple
2 extending into a lumen of the needle.

1 33. The device of claim 30 wherein one of the holding elements comprises a ramp
2 extending into a lumen of the needle.

1 34. The device of claim 30 wherein the needle defines a slot through a wall of the needle,
2 the first and second fixation members extending through the slot.

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cont. 1 35. The device of claim 30 further comprising a protector tube, the tube defining a bore,
2 wherein the needle is sized to fit into an end of the protector tube.

1 36. The device of claim 30 further comprising a push pin, the pin being sized to fit inside
2 the needle.